PERCEIVED SELF – EFFICACY AND GOAL ORIENTATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

A goal is an out come or attainment of an individual is striving to accomplish. Goals motivate people to act in order to reduce the discrepancy between "where they are" and "what they want to be". Students with learning goals have motivational, affective and learning strategies over time: When these have resulted in good attainment , it leads them to adopt achievement goals in the end. The objective of the paper is to investigate the relationship between the goal orientation and self efficacy. It was hypothesized that there will be no significant relationship between goal orientation and self-efficacy among undergraduates. A sample of 200 undergraduates were selected from the colleges of Chennai for this study. Researchers have found that self-efficacy and achievement improve when students set goals that are specific proximal and challenging. So it is the responsibility of the teachers to encourage students to set challenging goals.

KEYWORDS: Perceived Self-Efficacy, Goal Orientation, Goal.

INTRODUCTION:

Swami Vivekananda defines education, as the manifestation of perfection already is man. Life in modern times is complex and complicated. Man cannot adjust to it by himself automatically as was done in the past when the life was simple and easy. Now-a-days education is viewed as the human resource development and its investment on man-power.

"I think I can. I think I can. I think I can."

We all want our children to be able to cope with adversity, learn from failure, and work through difficult challenges. This requires self-efficacy—the ability to define a goal, persevere, and see oneself as capable. Parents and other adults can help children to develop self-efficacy by reinforcing their strengths and helping them identify steps or paths to achieve their goals.

Students enter learning activities with goals and self-efficacy for goal attainment. As learners work on tasks, they observe their own performances and evaluate their own goal progress. When students perceive satisfactory goal progress, they feel capable of improving their skills; goal attainment, coupled with high self-efficacy, leads students to set new challenging goals. As used in this article, a goal is what an individual is consciously trying to accomplish, goal orientation involves establishing a goal and modifying it as necessary, and perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs concerning one's capabilities to attain designated levels of performance (Bandura, 1986, 1988). Specific goals boost performance by greater specification of the amount of effort required for success. Specific goals promote self-efficacy because progress is easy to gauge. Goal

difficulty, or the level of task proficiency required as assessed against a standard, influences the effort learners expend to attain a goal. Assuming requisite skills, individuals expend greater effort to attain difficult goals than when standards are lower. Learners initially may doubt whether they can attain difficult goals, but working toward them builds self-efficacy. Students who hold low self-efficacy for learning may avoid tasks; those who judge themselves efficacious are more likely to participate. When facing difficulties, self-efficacious learners extend greater effort and persist longer than students who doubt their capabilities. Self-efficacy is conceptually similar to such other constructs as perceived competence, expectations of success, and self confidence.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

VRUGT ANNEKE, et.al (2002) studied goal orientations, perceived self – efficacy and study results amongst beginners and advanced students. It was found that amongst the beginners and the advanced students perceived self-efficacy contributed to pursue goals and these goals in turn contributed to course grades. The relations between these variables were clearly less strong for the beginners than for the advanced students. Furthermore, it was ascertained that a task orientation contributed only to perceived self-efficacy amongst the advanced students, suggesting that for these students motivational variable were operative where as they were still developed amongst the beginners.

Kenichi Akama (2006) studied relations among self – efficacy, goal setting and meta cognitive experiences in problem solving and examined the roles of meta cognitive experiences in the self – regulations process before problem – solving. Two hundred and sixty Japanese undergraduate students participated in this research to investigate the role of Meta cognitive experiences, a structural equation model was constructed to examine the relations among self – efficacy, goal – setting, meta cognitive experiences and performance. Analysis showed that meta cognitive experiences mediated the influence of self – efficacy on goal setting and performance. In addition these experiences were related to performance to some extent

Goals raised self-efficacy, and children who received goals and comparative information demonstrated the highest self-efficacy and skill. Providing children with a goal and information that is attainable may increase self efficacy for learning, which can raise instructional session performance and lead to greater skill acquisition. Schunk (1984) compared the effects of goals with those of rewards. Children received long division instruction and practice over sessions: Some were offered rewards commensurate with the number of problems completed, others pursued goals (number of problems to complete), and children in a third condition received rewards and goals. The three conditions promoted self-regulated learning during the instructional sessions; rewards plus goals resulted in the highest self-efficacy and division performance. Combining goals with rewards provided children with two sources of information to use in gauging learning progress.

NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY:

Present day society is science based and technological oriented. Hence, science and technology form powerful determinants of different aspects of educational phenomenon,

every one want to be first and have individual goals with them. But every body's goal is not fulfilled because of some circumstances. The individuals who won in the society should know him, his capacity, his talents and his ability while achieving their goals. Self – efficacy is a person's sense of being able to deal effectively with a particular task . Students with high self-efficacy often take on more challenging tasks, put in more effort, persist in the face of difficulty, and use strategies to make learning meaningful. When students believe in themselves, they may also be more likely to develop enabling goals that when executed will facilitate the accomplishing of the task, while students with sabotaging beliefs about their capabilities may avoid the learning task and opportunities to seek help. Thus, understanding students' beliefs about their capabilities can help educators understand better how goals are adopted and retained, where students' motivation comes from, and how to help students sustain the motivation that they gradually develop. Many researchers have suggested that students' self-efficacy is a good predictor of academic achievement and motivation (Graham & Weiner, 1996; Pajares, 2003; Pintrich & DeGroot1990). They set goals for themselves and plan courses of action. Hence , the goal and perceived self – efficacy becomes very important in one's life. So the present study deals how the undergraduate students, as they are in adolescence period, set their goal to achieve in their life. Adolescence period is a crucial period of one's life. The growth achieved, the experience gained, responsibilities felt and the relationships develop at this stage destine the complete future of an individual. So the present study attempts to analyse the relationship of perceived self – efficacy and goal orientation among the undergraduate students.

Objectives of the Study:

The following are the major objectives for the present study:

1. To investigate the relationship between goal orientation and perceived self – efficacy of under graduate students.
2. To investigate the difference between male and female undergraduate students in their goal orientation and perceived self – efficacy .
3. To investigate the difference between arts and science undergraduate students in their goal orientation and perceived self – efficacy.
4. To investigate the difference between first year and final year undergraduate students in their goal orientation and perceived self – efficacy.
5. To investigate the difference in goal orientation and perceived self – efficacy of undergraduate students with respect to type of management of institutions.

Variables of the Study:

The researcher selected the following variables in the present study

They are- **Dependent Variable** – Goal Orientation of under graduate students

Independent Variable – Self-Efficacy of under graduate students

Demographic Variables

- Gender – Boys and Girls

- Types of College - Government, Government – Aided and Self- Finance
- Stream of the Study - Science and Arts
- Year of the Study - First Year and Final Year.

Method of Research:

In this study the Survey Method of research was selected.

Sample of the study:

The sample were undergraduate college students in different types of colleges namely government, government- aided and self-finance. Keeping in view, the aim of the study, 100 undergraduate students from first year and 100 undergraduate students from the third year were randomly selected from six different colleges. While selecting the colleges care was taken to select one male and one female college in each type namely government ,government- aided and self-finance.

Tools used for the Collection of Data:

The Goal orientation questionnaire developed and validated by Geerard Seegers .et. al (2002) and the General Self efficacy scale developed by Ralf Schwarzer (1992) were used to collect data for the present study.

Statistical Techniques used for the Analysis of Data:

The data gathered were tabulated and statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test , ANOVA and Co-relation analysis were used to analyse the obtained data.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The formulated hypotheses have been tested using Correlation analysis, t-test and Analysis of variance and the results presented below.

Hypothesis No. 1:

There will be a significant relationship between goal orientation and perceived self-efficacy among undergraduate students.

Table No 1

CORRELATION MATRIX SHOWING THE INTER-CORRELATION AMONG GOAL ORIENTATION AND PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

Variables	**Goal orientation**	**Perceived Self- efficacy**
Goal orientation	1.0000	0.2130**

Perceived Self-efficacy	*	1.0000

From the Correlation matrix, it is seen that there is significant correlation among the variables at 0.01 level. Goal orientation and perceived self –efficacy are highly positively related. Individuals who generally approach tasks through the lens of a learning goal are likely to have had more mastery experiences because they have persisted more in challenging activities, and if they had experienced failure, they would be unlikely to view it as a sign of lack of ability. They probably perceived past experiences as a process of building or achieving mastery, and thus should have higher self-efficacy. Though self-efficacy has been considered to be one of the most powerful , the present result indicates that self-efficacy exerts a stronger positive influence on goal orientation. The interaction between goals and self-efficacy indicated that the joint effects of self-efficacy and goal orientation may offer key information in explaining student achievement better than the separate independent effects of each individual variable. Hence, the research hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis No. 2:

There will be no significant difference between the male and female undergraduates with respect to their goal orientation and perceived self –efficacy.

TABLE - 2

CRITICAL RATIO: MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND 't' VALUES OF GOAL ORIENTATION AND

PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY OF MALE AND FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES .

Variables	*Sex*				Standard Error of Deviation	'CR' Value	Level of Significance
	Male (N=100)		Female (N=100)				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Goal Orientation	47.32	4.69	47.83	3.56	0.34	1.50	NS*
Perceived self-efficacy	22.11	5.00	21.65	5.14	0.41	1.10	NS*

NS-Not significant

It is evident from the above table that the 'CR' value between male and female undergraduates is found to be not significant. This indicates that there is no

significant difference between male and female undergraduates with respect to goal orientation and perceived self-efficacy. It may be due to the fact that today female have equal opportunity like male. They are treated equal in every aspects. They shine in all the fields and they are motivated to achieve their goal equal to male. Among adolescents, gender differences in goal orientation and self –efficacy should not be expected when students are able to derive clear performance information about their capabilities or in progress in learning. Similarly Eccles.et.al(1983) reported no gender differences in expectancies of success in the current math class. Schunk and Lilly (1984) judged that boys and girls did not differ in achievement or self-efficacy. The performance feedback conveyed to students that they were learning and raised girl's self-efficacy to that of boys. Several studies were tried to identify goal orientation as a function of gender by Ethnier.et.al.(2001); Brdrar et.al.(2006). However UCUES data did not suppot the assertion that goal orientation differs between the sexes , which is consistent with the results of Meece and Holt (1993) and Niemivirta (1996) who concluded that goal orientation is equally frequent among male and female students.

Hypothesis No. 3:

There will be no significant difference between the arts and science undergraduates with respect to their goal orientation and perceived self –efficacy.

TABLE – 3
CRITICAL RATIO: MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND 't' VALUES OF THE STUDENTS STUDYING IN SCIENCE AND ARTS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR GOAL ORIENTATION AND PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY.

Variables	*Types of Group*				Standard Error of Deviation	'CR' Value	Level of Significance
	Science (N=100)		Arts (N=100)				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Goal Orientation	47.36	4.25	47.77	4.07	0.34	1.21	NS*
Perceived Self-efficacy	21.39	5.23	22.37	4.88	0.41	2.36	0.05

NS-Not significant

It is found that the CR value obtained between science and arts group students is found to be significant at 0.05 level with respect to self-efficacy. This indicates that there is significant difference between the science and arts group students with respect to self-efficacy. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected with respect to the variable of self-efficacy. It is also found that the CR value obtained between science and arts group students is not significant with respect to goal orientation .This indicates that there is no significant difference between science and arts group students with respect to goal

orientation .Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted with respect to the variable of goal orientation. Goal orientation seem to be more common in both arts and science stream. When the adolescence students fix their goal or engage in any task, they work to increase their competence and performance. The goal orientation allow the students to choose what they what to achieve, concentrate and improve. It gives a long term vision and short term motivation whether it is a science or arts stream , the goal orientation of the students helps them to achieve their academic performance and increase their motivation to achieve. The arts group students have high perceived self-efficacy, further they prefer to organize their task properly that lead to effective learning strategies. According to Seeman, Zhong, Beecher Brehman and Barchard (2007), comparing self efficacy of arts and science stream students , they found that arts students obtained slightly high self efficacy than the science stream students.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 4:

There will be no significant difference between the first year and final year undergraduates with respect to their goal orientation and perceived self –efficacy.

TABLE -4
CRITICAL RATIO: MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND 't' VALUES OF THE STUDENTS STUDYING IN FIRST YEAR AND FINAL YEAR WITH RESPECT TO GOAL ORIENTATION AND PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY.

Variables	*Year of Study*				Standard Error of Deviation	'CR' Value	Level of Significance
	First Year(N=100)		Final Year (N=100)				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Goal Orientation	47.38	4.16	47.75	4.16	0.34	1.09	NS
Perceived Self-efficacy	22.11	5.00	21.65	5.14	0.41	2.28	0.05

NS - Not Significant

It is found that the 'CR' value obtained between final year and first year students in the variable self-efficacy is significant at 0.05 level, indicating that there is a significant difference between the students studying in first year and final year with respect to self-efficacy. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected with respect to the variable of perceived self –efficacy. It is also found that the CR value obtained between the final year and first year students is not significant with respect to goal orientation. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the students studying in first year and final year with respect to goal orientation. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted with respect to the variable goal orientation. The first year and final year students shows no difference in

their goal orientation since they attain to achieve it. However, Nicholls (1990),found that among second graders, the ability to achieve the goal is fixed and they work to improve their ability through their efforts to achieve the performance goals. Further it is inferred from the table that the perceived self efficacy of first year students(22.11) have significantly higher mean than the final year students(21.65), which confirms with the findings of Baskind et.al (1992) which shows that the younger children tended to have a stronger sense of self-efficacy than older students.

Hypothesis No. 5:

There will be no significant difference between the government , government- aided and self –finance undergraduates with respect to their goal orientation and perceived self –efficacy.

TABLE – 5(A)

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF THE GOAL ORIENTATION AMONG THE UNDERGRADUATES IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF COLLEGE

SOURCE OF VARIATION	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Sum of Squares	F value	Level of significance
Between Groups	2	22.10	11.05	0.63	NS
Within Groups	597	10374.81	17.37		
Total	599	10396.91			

NS - Not Significant

It is inferred from the table presented that F value is not significant which shows that there is no significant difference in goal orientations among the undergraduates studying in government, government-aided and self finance colleges.

Table – 5(b)

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF PERCEIVED SELF – EFFICACY AMONG THE UNDERGRADUATES IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF COLLEGE

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SUM OF SQUARES	F VALUE	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
Between Groups	2	64.89	32.44	1.25	NS
Within Groups	597	15384.17	25.76		
Total	599	15449.06			

NS- Not Significant

From the table presented above it is inferred that 'F' value is not significant which shows that there is no significant difference in perceived self – efficacy among the undergraduates studying in different types of college.

The CR values of government- aided , government and self-finance colleges are not significant with respect to the variables goal orientation and perceived self efficacy. Hence, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the government, government-aided and self-finance undergraduate students with respect to their goal orientation and perceived self efficacy is accepted . It shows that the students who pursue both strong goal orientation and perceived self efficacy achieve higher performance and gained knowledge despite type of management of college where they study.

Major Findings of the Study:

The following findings were drawn within the restricted realm of the present study.

(1) The goal orientations and perceived self-efficacy are highly positively and significantly related among undergraduates.
(2) There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduates in their goal orientations and perceived self-efficacy.
(3) There is no significant difference between the arts and science group students with respect to goal orientation .

(4) The arts group students possess more self efficacy than the science group students.
(5) There is no significant difference between the first and final year undergraduates in their goal orientation .
(6) The final year students perceived more self efficacy than the first year students.
(7) There is no significant difference in goal orientation and perceived self-efficacy among the undergraduates studying in different types of college.

5.4 EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION:

Researchers have found that self-efficacy and achievement improve when students set goals that are specific proximal and challenging. So it is the responsibility of the teachers to encourage students to set challenging goals. A challenging goal is a commitment to self – improvement. Strong interest and involvement in activities is sparked by challenges. Goals that are easy to reach generate little interest or effort. However, goals should be optimally matched to the student's skill level. If goals are unrealistically high, the result will be repeated failures that lower the student's self – efficacy. Teachers should encourage students to develop task involved mastery goals rather than ego involved to work – avoidant goals. Many of the changes involved in the transition to middle schools are likely to increase students' motivation to achieve performance goals.

Most successful adults are good time managers, yet schools are helping the students to improve of practice time management skills. They not only helps to improve their achievement in class but also should help them develop critical skills for success in work and life beyond school. The teachers should give the assignments that are inherently interesting, challenging but not over whelm their skills. Establish a reward system so that all students make effort to achieve the rewards. Make sure that rewards reinforce students for setting meaningful beliefs about their abilities.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that a self-efficacy helps the student to achieve the task likewise the ego oriented students are mainly concerned with making a good impression, beating others and showing their superiority. They will also have received much feed back on their knowledge and capabilities, through course marks and judgments. Their view of their own possibilities as well as the personal goals which are pursued can be adjusted to the task requirement. In accordance with this, the student's self-efficacy beliefs and personal goals in the field of scientific research were found to be strong predictors of future achievements.

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